Women Diplomats

4377. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of women diplomats belonging to Indian Foreign Service who are working as heads of diplomatic missions abroad at present;

(b) whether Government propose to reserve certain percentage of heads of diplomatic missions abroad for women diplomats; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) At present there are two women diplomats belonging to Indian Foreign Service working in the following diplomatic Missions:

(1) Mrs. Manorama Bhalla — Ambassador of India to Spain.

(2) Ms. Savitri Kunadi — Ambassador to UNESCO (based in Paris)

(b) there is no such proposal.

(c) There is no provisions in the Rules of Indian Foreign Service for reservation for any category including women for the post of Head of the Mission.

Passports issued in the country

4378. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of passports issued in the entire country during the last three years, year wise;

(b) what is the number of staff working in passport offices in the entire country; and

(c) what steps Government are taking to increase the strength of staff?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Total number of passports issued in the country was 15,58,145 in 1989, 15,38,783 in 1990 and 16,15,019 in 1991.

(b) Staff working in the passport offices in the entire country ws 1373 as on 25th March, 1992.

(c) A proposal to augment staff strength in the passport offices is under consideration.

भूटान में सीमेंट परियोजना

4379. **श्री अजीत जोगी:** क्या विदेशी मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या भूटान सहायता कार्यक्रम के अधीन भूटान में नागलम में एक सीमेंट परियोजना कार्यान्वित किये जाने को कोई प्रस्ताव सरकार के विचाराधीन है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में क्या कदम उठाये जा रहे हैं और इसके कब तक पूरा हो जाने की सम्भावना है?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री माधव सिंह सोलंकी): (क) जी हां। भूटान की शाही सरकार के अनुरोध पर भारत भूटान को सहायता कार्यक्रम के अन्तर्गत भूटान में नागलम में एक सीमेंट संयंत्र का कार्यान्वयन आरंभ करेगा।

(ख) भारत सरकार और भूटान की शाही सरकार के बीच परियोजना के करार पर हस्ताक्षर होने के बाद नागलम सीमेण्ट परियोजना की विस्तृत परियोजना रिपोर्ट को अद्यतन किया जाएगा। उम्मीद है कि परियोजना का क्रियान्वयन 1993 में आरंभ हो जाएगा और इसे 1997-98 में पूरा किया जा सकेगा।

Seminars organised by ICCR

4380. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of incoming and outgoing delegations hosted by ICCR in 1991-92 till date giving countries of origin and destination;

(b) the details of seminars, conferences, symposias and lectures hosted or sponsored by ICCR in 1991-92 upto present date; and

(c) whether ICCR has selected the talent available in Andhra Pradesh for international cultural events?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Details of incoming and outgoing delegations hosted by ICCR, being voluminous, have been placed in Parliament Library.

(b) Information as statement is laid on the Table of the House (see below)

(c) Yes, Sir.

Statement

During the year 1991-92 upto present

date, the details of Seminars, Conferences, Symposiums and Lectures organised and sponsored by the Council are as follows:

Seminars and Conferences

1. **'ACTOR AT WORK' SEMINAR**

The National Centre for Performing Arts, Bombay organised a 7-day Seminar on 'Actor at Work' from 9—15 November 1991. The ICCR was entrusted with local hospitality of the Foreign participants besides providing international passage to one participants from Peru. Foreign participants from Czecholovakia, Poland, UK, Germany, France, and Peru took part in the Seminar.

Seminar on "The Historical and Cultural Relations between Egypt and India through the Ages"

A Saminar on 'The Historical and Cultural Relations between Egypt and India through the Ages' was held in Cairo from 14—17 September, 1991. The Seminar which falls within the context of cultural cooperation between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Republic of India was aimed at bolstering the ties of cultural, intellectual and artistic cooperation. The Indian delegation to the 4-day seminar was headed by Dr. (Smt.) Najma Haptulla, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and included Prof. M.S. Agwani, Shri T.N. Kaul, Dr. Saryu Doshi, Dr. M.K. Dhavilkar, Dr. M.C. Joshi, Father Paulos Mar Greogorius, Dr. (Smt.) Lotika Varadarajan, Prof. Mahmudul Haq, Prof. A.M.K. Dalvi, Dr. L.P. Sihare, Dr. Akhtar-ul-Wassey, Dr. Ismat Mehdi and Ms. Geeti Sen.

International Seminar on Sufism

As part of the Maulana Azad Centenary Celebrations the ICCR organised an International Seminar on Sufism in New Delhi from November 11—13, 1991. The Seminar was inaugurated by Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Vice President of India/ President, ICCR. The participants in the Seminar included over 28 participants from abroad and over 50 participants from India. The foreign participants were from Afghanistan, France, Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, UK, USSR, Bangladesh, Iran, Turkey, Japan, Malaysia, Czecholovakia, USA, Egypt, Nepal, Thailand and Italy. A unique exhibition of Calligraphy and manuscripts pertaining to Sufism was arranged on the occasion by the ICCR in collaboration with the National Museum, New Delhi. The publication Rubaiyat of Sarmad containing select quartrains of the Sufi Saint poet Sarmad and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's essay Sarmad Shaheed rendered into English: was released on the occasion. Fifty papers were presented on the themes: Sufism History and Philosophy, Contemporary Relevance of Sufism, Sufism and the Arts.

As part of the Seminar, the ICCR also organised performing arts events based on Sufi Music, literature and poetry. Baul Songs, Sufiana Kalam, Tarana, Qawwali, The musical drama 'Sulagde Darya' Lallan Geeti from Bangladesh and Dances of the Whirling Dervishes from Turkey were presented on the occasion.

Conference on "20th Century Hispanism"

The Centre of Spanish Studies of the Jawaharlal Nehru University organised Second International Conference on 20th Century Hispanism from 11—14 November 1991 in New Delhi. The homage to the Argentinian writer and poetess Victoria Ocampo forms a part of the International conference to which the Centre of Spanish Studies and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations invited eminent and distinguished scholars viz. Prof. Reene Maria Cura, Argentina, Mr. Javier Sologuren, Peru, Dr. Luis Beltran, Spain besides Indian scholars. One session on 12th November 1991 was dedicated to the memory of Victoria Ocampo.

Symposium on Cross-Cultural Influences on Indo-Turkish Relations

A 2-day Symposium on Cross-Cultural influences on Indo-Turkish Relations was held in Ankara on 19-20 December, 1991 under the Indo-Turkish, Cultural Exchange Programme. The ICCR sent three scholars viz. Dr. A.R. Bedar, Director Khuda Baksh Library, Patna, Dr. Nasim Akhtar, Keeper Manuscripts, National Museum, Prof. Shoaib Azmi, Department of Persian Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi to participate in the Symposium. The Symposium was

organised to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Indo-Turkish Cultural Agreement signed during the visit of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Turky in 1951.

Indo-British Discussion Group

An Indo-British Discussion Group was organised from 6—9 January 1992 at the India International Centre on the theme "Ethnicity, Nationality and Sovereignty". About 12 participants from Britain and 12 participants from India took part in the discussion. The Council provided local hospitality to the foreign participants.

Baba Saheb Ambedkar Birth Centenary Lectures

At the invitation of ICCR, Prof. Marc Galanter of the University of Wisconsin and Prof. (Ms.) Eleanor Zelliot of Carleton College, Minnesoto, USA delivered the lectures as part of the Birth Centenary Celebrations of Baba Saheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar from the period March 5 to 19, 1992 and March 14 to 23, 1992 respectively in various cities of India viz. Madras, Nagpur, Bombay, Mhow, Lucknow. The lectures were arranged in collaboration with the Ministry of Welfare.

Symposium of Translators

The Council sponsored Dr. Amrendra Misra, Assistant Editor in the Council to participate in the Symposium of Translators organised by Vernamala, a Socio-Cultural Voluntary Society in Bhubaneswar on 14-15 March 1992.

Safeguarding Interests of Persons of Indian Origin in Fiji

4381. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Diplomatic Missions in Fiji had to be closed down in June, 1990, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) what steps the Government of India have taken till date to safeguards the interests of people of Indian origin in Fiji?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes Sir. The authorities in Fiji asked India on May 23, 1990, to close down its mission in Suya.

(b) The Government of India believes that restoration of democracy and racial harmony in Fiji is the *sine qua* non of ensuring the welfare of the people of Indian origin in that country. Accordingly, the Government has vigorously pursued these concerns at international organisations and at a bilateral level with countries such as Australia, New Zealand, France, UK, USA and Mauritius.

Formation of Islamic Block

4382. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Turkey, Iran and Pakistan as part of more stringent fundamentalism have revived the moribund Regional Cooperation for Development Organisation and delegations from the three countries met in Tehran recently to put life into the inactive group under the new title Economic Cooperation Organisation;

(b) whether the three Islamic republics of the erstwhile Soviet Union—Azerbaijan, Uzbekhistan and Turkmenistan also attended the above meeting apart from two other Central Asian republics sent observers;

(c) whether this meeting also evolved the concept of an Islamic common market;

(d) whether India has studied the implications of this proposal not only from point of view of its purely commercial and economic motivation but also from the point of view of emergence of an Islamic Block; and

(e) if so, what is Government reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) In 1985, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey set up the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO). At its first Summit meeting in Tehran on 16-17 February 1992, apart from these three countries, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan,